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ABSTRACT

Developing instruction is a critical part of the education process. For instruction to be effective it should be organized and well planned. Development of an effective program should include careful consideration of the need for instruction, the audience, and the course content. Instruction delivered via telecommunications can be even more complex and therefore best developed using a structured, systems approach. Most instructional development processes include four basic stages: instructional design, development, formative evaluation, and revision. During the design phase, a needs assessment is performed to determine the need for instruction, analyze the audience, and establish instructional goals. Development entails developing specific objectives for each goal, developing content to meet the objectives, and developing or selecting materials and methods. Formative evaluation includes the development of an evaluation strategy and the collection and analysis of evaluation data. The revision phase entails revising those aspects of the program that were shown to need improvement. This brief guide provides an overview of the instructional development process and guidelines for each of the four basic stages. (DB)

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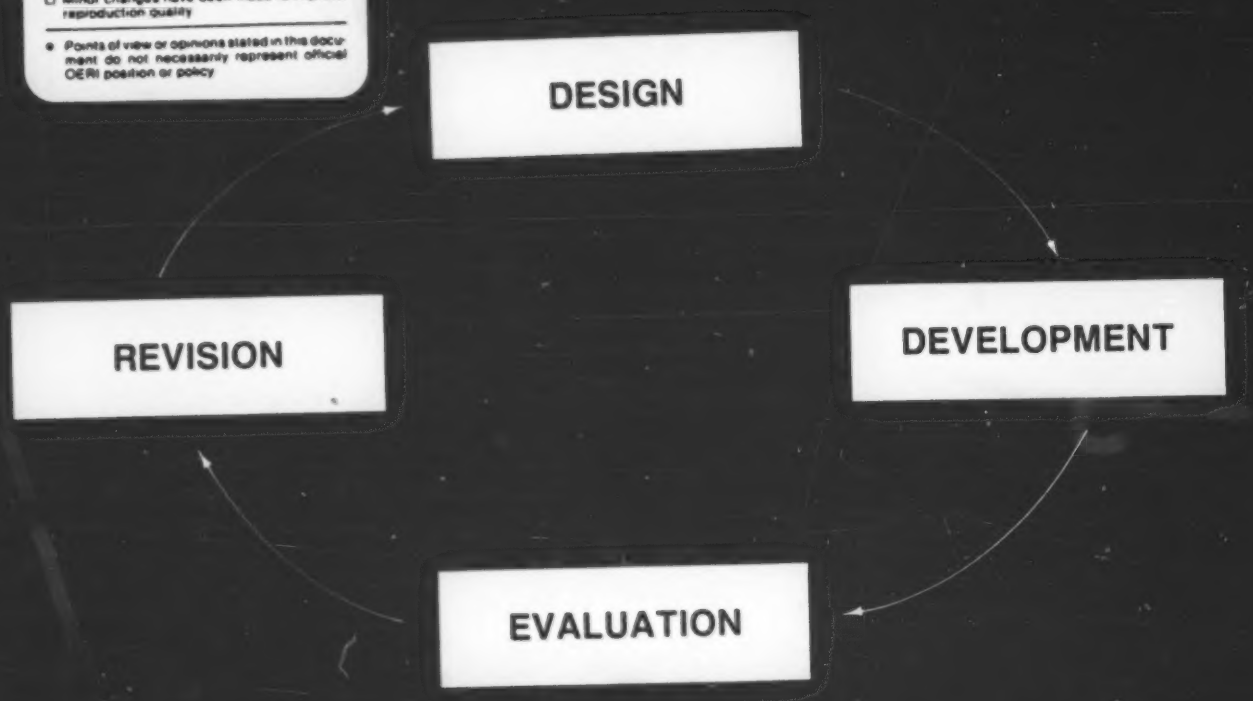

INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT A GLANCE

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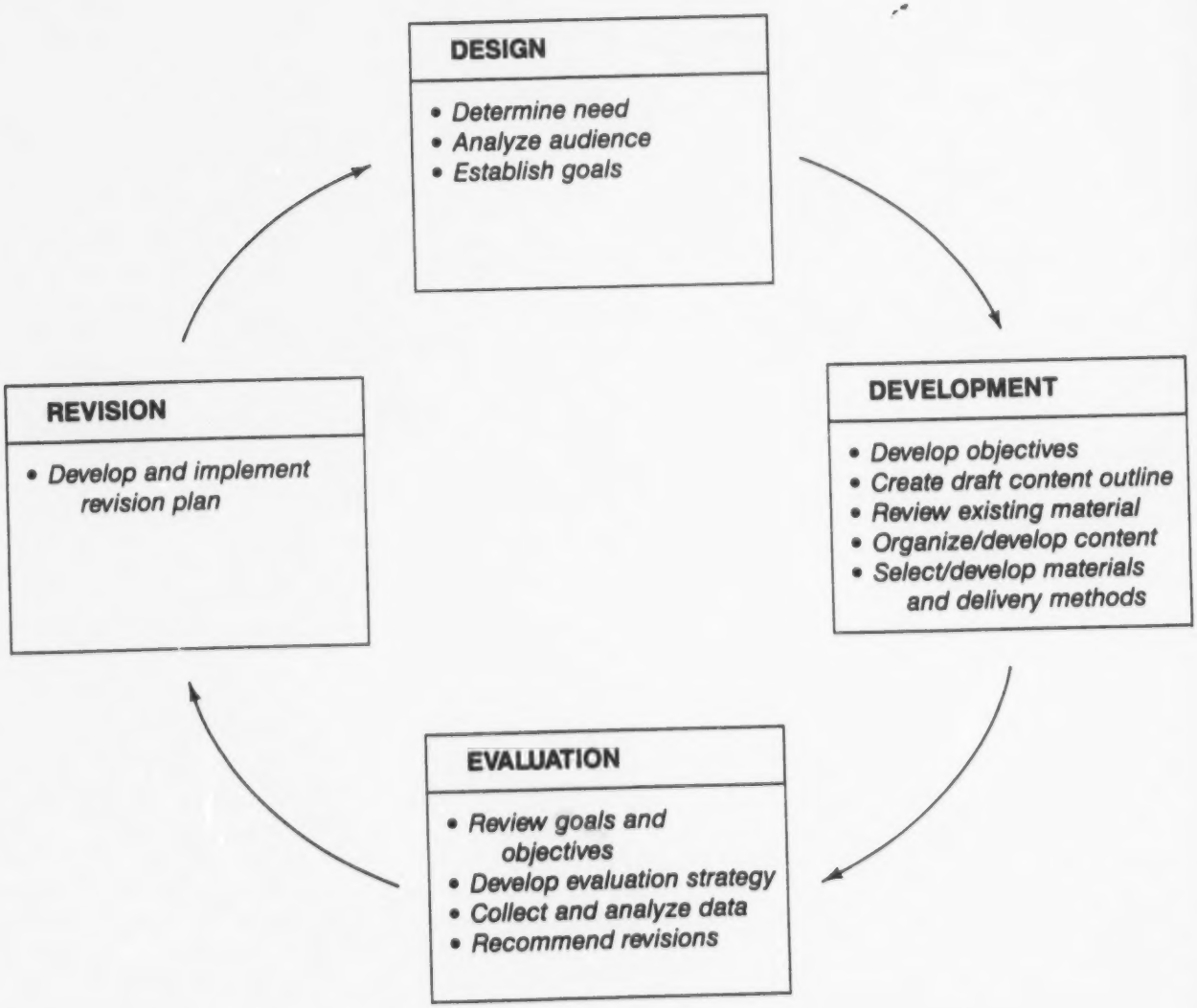
INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT — AN ONGOING PROCESS

Instructional development is an ongoing process. In order to meet the needs of a rapidly changing educational environment, instruction must be adaptive and constantly open to review and revision. You can use this instructional development process as a tool to create or adapt your instruction to better meet your needs as well as the needs of the learner and the content requirements of the topic.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



INTRODUCTION

Developing instruction is a critical part of the educational process. For instruction to be effective, it should be organized and well planned. Development of an effective program should include careful consideration of the need for instruction, the audience, and the course content. Instruction delivered via telecommunication can be even more complex and therefore best developed using a structured, systematic approach, such as the one presented here.

This instructional development process can be useful for providing organization and direction for your instruction. It can also provide the flexibility needed to expand or shorten the process itself. Decisions to modify the process should be based on the needs of the learner, requirements for content, and constraints placed on the instructor.

Most instructional development processes include four basic stages: Design, Development, Evaluation, and Revision. These are briefly described below in order of approach.

DESIGN

☐ ***Determine the need for instruction.*** To begin, determine the need for instruction from a number of perspectives, such as:

- **How do you know the planned instruction is needed?**
- **Why does the audience need this instruction?**
- **What factors led to this need for instruction?**
- **What past experiences indicate that the instruction you are planning could meet this need?**
- **What are the differing views on issues such as content and delivery methods?**

Performing this assessment of need will help you develop your instruction to fill the gap between "What is . . ." and "What should be . . ."

☐ ***Analyze your audience.*** It is also important to look carefully at the learner group or audience for whom the instruction is intended. Your analysis may include a number of perspectives, such as:

- **How large is the audience?**
- **What ages, cultural backgrounds, and educational levels are included?**
- **How familiar is the audience with various instructional methods?**
- **How will the audience use the information presented?**
- **What is the audience level of interest and ability?**

The more thoroughly you understand the characteristics of each learner group, the more relevant the instruction can be.

☐ ***Establish instructional goals.*** Goals can now be established. Instructional goals are usually broad, generalized statements of purpose based on the needs assessment and the audience analysis.

DEVELOPMENT

☐ ***Develop specific objectives for each goal.*** Begin with a methodical division of your broad goals into a series of objectives or statements of accomplishment. Generally, have objectives build on each other, leading to the achievement of each goal. This step-by-step approach to developing objectives can help ensure that your topic is systematically examined and that major issues are covered in logical, sequential order.

When developing objectives, have them:

- **Stated in precise terms describing exactly what should be done.**
- **Written as descriptions of performance and stated in terms that can be measured.**
- **Worded so that learning experiences can be developed to satisfy each objective.**
- **Build into a learning hierarchy.**

☐ ***Create a rough content outline.*** After developing objectives, create a rough outline of the content to be covered based on the audience analysis, instructional goals, objectives, and your understanding of the course content.

☐ ***Review existing materials.*** Next, locate and review content-related print and non-print materials currently in existence. It is often more cost and time efficient to use or adapt existing materials than to develop new ones. However, avoid using materials or media just because they are available.

☐ ***Organize/develop content to meet objectives.*** Reorganize, revise, and refine your rough outline to correspond to the order and content needs indicated by your objectives. Next, develop the content required to meet your objectives.

☐ ***Select/develop materials and methods.*** Base your selection and development of materials and delivery methods on the following criteria:

- **Content and objectives.**
- **Audience characteristics and experience.**
- **Time, money, and personnel availability/constraints.**

Notes:

EVALUATION

☐ ***Review Goals and Objectives.*** The fundamental purpose of evaluation is to determine if your instructional methods and materials are accomplishing the goals and objectives you developed. Implementing your instruction represents the first real test of what you have developed. Try to pre-test your instruction on a small scale prior to actual use. If this is not possible, your first actual use will also serve as the "field test" for determining effectiveness.

☐ ***Develop an evaluation strategy.*** Plan how and when to evaluate the effectiveness of your instruction. Evaluation throughout the teaching process (formative) can be used to revise instruction before the course is completed. Evaluation after instruction is completed (summative) provides a data base for planning future courses. If possible, it is best to use a combination of formative and summative evaluation methods throughout the instructional process. Consider evaluating the following:

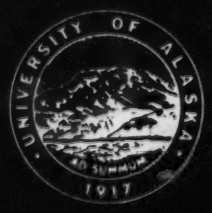
- **Audience attitude and performance.**
- **Strengths and weaknesses of program.**
- **Effectiveness of teaching techniques and delivery systems.**
- **Instructor effectiveness.**
- **Degree to which course objectives were met.**

☐ ***Collect and analyze evaluation data.*** Following implementation of your course/materials, collect your evaluation data. Carefully analyze these results to identify gaps or weaknesses in your instructional process. It is equally important to identify strengths and successes.

☐ ***Recommend revisions based on analysis.*** Results of your evaluation analysis should indicate which elements of your instruction should be changed or eliminated and which should be retained. They provide a "springboard" from which to develop a revision plan.

REVISION

☐ ***Develop and implement a revision plan.*** A certain amount of revision is to be expected as a result of your evaluation efforts. Typically, however, this revision is worth the effort and should result in more effective instruction. Revisions will require returning to the Design, Development, or Evaluation stages to make changes in the ongoing process of Instructional Development.



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